

ANNEX A

WARNING

CITY OF HOUSTON

APPROVAL & IMPLEMENTATION

Annex A

WARNING

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ANNEX A

WARNING

I. AUTHORITY

See the City of Houston Basic Plan, Volume I.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this annex is to outline the organization, operational concepts, responsibilities and procedures to disseminate timely and accurate warnings to the public and government officials in the event of an impending emergency situation.

III. EXPLANATION OF TERMS

A. Acronyms

AWC	Area Warning Centers
CAER	Community Awareness & Emergency Response
GDEM	Governor's Division of Emergency Management
DHS	Department of Homeland Security (Federal)
DPS	Texas Department of Public Safety
EAS	Emergency Alert System
EMC	Emergency Management Coordinator
FAOC	FEMA Alternate Operations Center
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FNARS	FEMA National Radio System
FOC	FEMA Operations Center
HSOC	Homeland Security Operations Center
INS	Incidents of National Significance
LWP	Local Warning Point
MANS	Media Alert Notification System
NAWAS	National Warning System
NEWS	Network Early Warning System
NOAA	National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
NWS	National Weather Service
OEM	Houston's Office of Emergency Management
PIO	Public Information Office or Officer
SOC	State Operation Center
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TLETS	Texas Law Enforcement Telecommunications System
TEWAS	Texas Warning System

B. Definitions

1. Area Warning Centers (AWC). AWC disseminate national and state warning messages to a multi-county area of responsibility. Located throughout the State are several AWC that are operated on a round-the-clock basis by the Department of Public Safety. Each center is equipped with a variety of primary and alternate telecommunications systems.
2. Warning Messages. These messages alert the public to emergency situations and provide directions on what they should do and not do to protect themselves. Refer to Appendix 5 of this annex for additional information.
3. Special News Advisories. Special News Advisories amplify information contained in the warning messages. Refer to Appendix 5 of this annex for additional information.
4. Texas Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (TLETS). TLETS is a statewide telecommunications network connecting state and local law enforcement agencies and warning facilities. TLETS is the state warning network's primary "hard copy" communications system.

IV. SITUATION & ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. This jurisdiction can expect to experience emergency situations that could threaten public health and safety as well as both private and public property and necessitate the implementation of protective actions for the public at risk.
2. Emergency situations can occur at any time; therefore, equipment and procedures to warn the public of impending emergency situations must be in place and ready to use at any time.
3. Power outages may disrupt radio and television systems that carry warning messages and provide public instructions.
4. Houston does not have a fixed outdoor warning system (i.e., sirens).

B. Assumptions

1. Timely warnings to the public of impending emergencies or those which have occurred may save lives, decrease injuries and reduce some types of property damage.
2. Electronic news media are the primary sources of emergency information for the general public.
3. Some people who are directly threatened by a hazard may ignore, not hear, or not understand warnings issued by the government.
4. Provision should be made to provide warnings to special needs groups, such as the hearing and sight-impaired and institutions, such as nursing homes.

5. Local radio and television stations will broadcast Emergency Alert System (EAS) messages when requested by local government officials. To effectively utilize EAS, local governments and broadcasters must coordinate the procedures used to transmit warning messages and instructions from local government to broadcasters.
6. The local National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio station will broadcast weather watches and all-hazards warnings issued by the National Weather Service (NWS). Weather radios are activated when such messages are broadcast.

V. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. General

1. The primary objective of a warning system is to notify key officials of emergency situations and disseminate timely in addition to accurate warnings and instructions to the population at risk from the threat or occurrence of an emergency situation. Rapid dissemination and delivery of warning information and instructions may provide time for citizens to take action to protect themselves and their property.
2. The focal point of the warning function is the Local Warning Point (LWP). The City's LWP is the Houston Police Department's Emergency Communications Division which is located at the Houston Emergency Center (HEC).
 - a. The LWP receives warning of actual or potential emergency situations from a variety of sources, including federal and state agencies, local officials, businesses, industry, the news media, and the general public. The systems by which warnings may be received by the LWP are depicted in Appendix 1.
 - b. The LWP will verify warning information, where necessary, and disseminate pertinent information to specific local officials and departments.
 - 1) For certain types of time-sensitive warnings, the LWP may be authorized to activate the local warning system and warn the public immediately. In other situations, local officials must approve activation of the warning system and determine appropriate instructions to accompany the warning before a warning is disseminated to the public.
 - 2) For other types of emergency situations, the EOC may be activated and assume responsibility for formulating warning messages and public instructions, which may be disseminated through the LWP or provided to the media for dissemination.
 - c. Once warnings are received and, where necessary, verified, warnings that affect the local area and appropriate public

instructions are disseminated by the LWP. The specific systems used to disseminate warnings and provide information to the public within the local area are depicted in Appendix 1.

B. Receiving Warnings

The City may receive warning of actual emergency situations or the threat of such situations from the following:

1. National and State Warning Systems

- a. The National Warning System (NAWAS) is a 24-hour nationwide, dedicated, multiple line telephone warning system to disseminate civil emergency warnings from federal agencies to the State Operations Center (SOC). NAWAS is a voice communications system operated by the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and controlled from the FEMA Operations Center (FOC) in Washington, D.C., and the FEMA Alternate Operations Center (FAOC) in Olney, Maryland. NAWAS is used to disseminate three types of civil emergency warnings to state and local governments:

- 1) Attack Warnings
- 2) Fallout Warnings
- 3) Natural and Technological Emergency Warnings

Warnings originating from the FOC or FAOC will be relayed through the FEMA Regional Communications Center in Denton to the State Warning Point at the SOC in Austin. The State Warning Point further disseminates the civil emergency warnings through the Texas Warning System (TEWAS). The FEMA National Radio System (FNARS), a network of high frequency (HF) radios, serves as a backup for NAWAS.

For actual or potential Incidents of National Significance (INS), the Secretary of Homeland Security will make a determination of whether or not an event meets the criteria established for an INS. When the Secretary declares an event is an INS, the Homeland Security Operations Center (HSOC) notifies the affected state(s) using appropriate operational security protocols.

- b. The Texas Warning System (TEWAS) is a state level extension of NAWAS. It consists of a dedicated telephone warning system linking the State Warning Point at the SOC with AWC located in Department of Public Safety offices around the state and NWS offices in Texas.
 - 1) The State Warning Point relays national emergency warnings received on NAWAS to Area Warning Centers using TEWAS. AWC will normally disseminate warnings they receive to LWPs via teletype messages on the TLETS.

Warnings may be disseminated by telephone or radio to those LWPs that cannot be reached by TLETS.

- 2) TEWAS may also be used by the SOC to disseminate warning messages from the Governor or other key state officials to specific regions of the state.
- c. Specific formats and handling instructions have been established for certain national civil emergency messages that would be disseminated by NAWAS and TEWAS. Appendix 2 provides guidance on handling national warning messages.
- d. As NAWAS and TEWAS are “voice only” systems that are not particularly suited for disseminating lengthy messages; hence, these systems are generally not used for warning on a daily basis.

2. NWS

Weather warning messages are issued by the NWS Weather Forecast Offices and various NWS specialized weather centers, such as NWS river forecast centers, the National Severe Storms Forecast Center, and the National Hurricane Center.

- a. The NWS disseminates weather forecasts, watches, and warnings via the NOAA Weather Wire Service, which is a satellite communications system that broadcasts to specialized receiver terminals. In Texas, NWS weather products, such as watches and warnings, are transmitted by Weather Wire to the SOC. The SOC, as the State Warning Point, retransmits these weather messages to appropriate AWC and LWPs by TLETS. Among the weather messages that are provided are:

- 1) Flood and flash flood watches and warnings
- 2) Severe weather watches and warnings
- 3) Tornado watches and warnings
- 4) Tropical weather watches and warnings

Many local radio and television stations subscribe to the NOAA Weather Wire Service and have installed terminals to receive weather products directly from the NWS.

- b. In addition, the NWS Warning System transmits weather information 24 hours per day to the public. The system uses a signal to activate special home receivers when a severe weather warning is being issued. Many City departments have a weather alert radio to receive NWS weather warnings.

3. NOAA All-Hazards Network

The DHS’s Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection Directorate and the U.S. Department of Commerce’s NOAA have signed an agreement that allows the DHS to send critical all-hazards alerts and

warnings directly through the NOAA All-Hazards Network. The Network supplements the existing alert and warning resources and serves as an additional delivery mechanism for sending life-saving information nationally, regionally or locally. In addition, DHS's FEMA will continue to manage the EAS that includes the NOAA All-Hazards Network.

4. EAS

EAS is intended to provide a means for government to provide emergency warning and instructions to the public. This jurisdiction may receive EAS messages that contain warning information broadcast by:

- a. Federal authorities or agencies
- b. State government
- c. Other local governments

Civil emergency warnings issued through NAWAS may also be disseminated through EAS. Incoming EAS messages may be received on commercial radio or television stations monitored by local officials or on the EAS encoder/decoder located in the EOC at the HEC. The EAS stations for the City of Houston are:

Local Primary - One (LP-1):	KTRH-AM 740, Houston
Monitoring Assignments:	Primary Entry Point and State EOC Lines NOAA All-Hazards Network Texas State Network (Channel 1 or 0-Left)
Local Primary - Two (LP-2):	KUHF-FM 88.7, Houston
Monitoring Assignments:	NOAA All-Hazards Network KTRH-AM 740

The above stations will record and re-transmit the emergency information at their discretion. Non-English speaking television and radio stations will re-transmit the emergency information at their discretion.

5. State Government

From time to time, the SOC issues warning messages to local governments in specific regions of the State. For example, an advisory may be issued to inland jurisdictions along major evacuation routes when large-scale evacuations begin in coastal areas due to a hurricane. Warnings issued by the SOC are typically transmitted by TLETS to AWC and LWP.

6. Local Officials

Government employees may provide warning of emergency situations they have discovered or that have been reported to their departments and

have been confirmed. Such situations should be reported to the LWP through any available means of communications.

7. Business and Industry

Companies that suffer a major fire, explosion, hazardous materials spill, or other emergency situation that may pose a threat to public health and safety and public or private property have a general duty to notify local officials of such occurrences. In 1986, the East Harris County Manufacturers Association established the CAER Line (Community Awareness and Emergency Response) as a source of information about emergency response incidents at member facilities that may impact the community. The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is allowed to put a message(s) on the CAER Line, if necessary. Companies reporting emergency situations that may pose a risk to the public are expected to recommend to local government appropriate actions to protect people and property.

8. Federal, State, or Local Agencies

Warning of specific types of emergency situations may be received directly from specialized government agencies, including river authorities, dam operators, the US Coast Guard, military installations, airport authorities, and other agencies which operate specialized facilities.

9. Citizen Warning

Citizens may also provide warning of emergency situations, generally by calling 9-1-1. It is always advisable to confirm information on emergency situations reported by citizens before issuing a public warning regarding those situations.

10. Other Warnings Available

Skywarn

Skywarn is a NWS program designed to train personnel in the field how to spot and track severe weather. These field personnel are trained by the NWS in basic severe weather meteorology and in how and what to report to the proper officials. The local Skywarn team is made up of government personnel and private citizens whose activities are directed by a coordinator. During periods of severe weather, the spotters are notified and relay reports back to the NWS. The Skywarn program is activated by the NWS.

Flood Warning System

The NWS, Harris County Office of Emergency Management, US Army Corps of Engineers and River Authorities have established a network of rain and river flood sensing warning devices to collect data for flood

warning purposes. If excessive rainfall occurs, the NWS and the River Forecast Center make flood predictions and, if necessary, warnings are issued through the NOAA All-Hazards Network and the media. OEM and the Harris County Office of Emergency Management will be in constant communication throughout the flood event.

EMWIN

Weather information broadcast via satellite through the Emergency Managers Wireless Information Network (EMWIN). OEM receives EMWIN messages via pager from the local NWS.

Other Weather Information

The OEM has contracted with a commercial provider to obtain weather information and radar images via the internet.

C. Notification of Local Officials

When the Houston Police Department's Emergency Communications Division receives a warning of an emergency situation, it shall make notification to key local officials, based on departmental protocol, so they can determine appropriate actions to deal with the situation. Notification will be made by telephone, radio, pager, or any other means available.

D. Dissemination of Warnings to the Public

1. In the initial stages of an emergency situation, the LWP will, within the limits of the authority delegated to it, determine if a warning needs to be issued, formulate a warning and disseminate it. Appendix 3 provides general guidelines for activation of the local warning system. When the EOC has been activated, the EOC will normally determine who needs to be warned and how and will normally formulate warning messages and public instructions. The LWP or the EOC will normally execute such warnings by activating the appropriate warning system(s). Refer to Annex I – Emergency Public Information for how emergency public information is disseminated.
2. The systems described below will be used to issue warnings and instructions to the public.
 - a. EAS
 - 1) As a condition of licensing, all commercial radio and television stations and cable television companies must participate in EAS and use their facilities to relay warning and instructions from government to the public. Broadcasters and cable companies must carry national security warnings and messages initiated by the President; they may broadcast alerts and messages initiated by state and local governments. The Federal Communications Commission encourages licensees to broadcast state and local warning and instruction messages, but the final

decision on broadcasting such messages rests with the broadcaster.

- 2) For obvious reasons, EAS should be used prudently. Activation of EAS by local governments is governed by the *Texas EAS Plan* and local EAS plans developed in each of the state's EAS districts. The general guidelines for local activation of EAS include:

- a) Severity of situation. EAS warning will aid in reducing loss of life or substantial loss of property.
- b) Timeliness. Immediate public knowledge is required to avoid adverse impact.
- c) Alternatives. Other means of disseminating information are inadequate to ensure rapid delivery.

- 3) The local EAS stations are listed in Appendix 4. The City has coordinated with these stations to establish procedures for accessing the EAS, which are included in that appendix. Authority to release EAS messages for broadcast is restricted to those local officials named in Appendix 4. The following methods will be used to transmit emergency messages to EAS stations for broadcast:

- a) By telephone, with the station generally recording our verbal message and then broadcasting it.
- b) By fax, with the station receiving our written message and reading it on the air.
- c) By using the EAS encoder/decoder to prepare a message, affix EAS originator, subject, and location codes, and send it to the local EAS station.

b. Route Alerting & Door-to-Door Warning

The public may be warned by route alerting using vehicles equipped with sirens and public address systems. Warnings may also be delivered by response personnel going door-to-door. Both of these methods are effective in delivering warning, but they are labor-intensive and time-consuming and may not be feasible for large areas.

- c. NOAA Weather Radio. Pursuant to an agreement with the NWS Forecast Office in League City, those local officials authorized to release EAS messages may request that the NWS activate the NOAA Weather Radio system to broadcast civil emergency messages. This system can broadcast voice messages to individuals who have a NOAA Weather Radio or receive Weather Radio broadcasts on cable television.

- d. Cable Television Interrupt. The EOC has the capability to interrupt local cable television systems (directly Time Warner, Optel, Phonoscope, Seabridge and indirectly TVMAX) with an emergency voice message. This means of warning only reaches those who have cable television and have their television set turned on.
 - e. Municipal Channel
Can be used to send a message crawler to communicate with the public.
 - f. Telephone Warning/Information System
Network Early Warning System (NEWS). A telephone warning system operated by the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network. The system calls residents of specified neighborhoods to alert them when danger threatens.
 - g. Industry Warning System
Community Awareness & Emergency Response (CAER) Line. Refer to section V.B.7 of this annex.
 - h. Media Alert Notification System (MANS). A web based notification system linking emergency management officials with the local news media.
- E. Warning Special Facilities and Populations
The following methods may be used to alert special populations and facilities of emergency situations:
 - 1. Visually-impaired: EAS messages on radio, NOAA Weather Radio, route alerting, door-to-door notification
 - 2. Hearing-impaired: Captioned EAS messages on television, route alerting, door-to-door notification
 - 3. Special facilities: EAS messages on radio/television, NOAA Weather Radio, route alerting, door-to-door notification
- F. Warnings to Other Governments and Agencies
 - 1. The LWP is responsible for warning adjacent or nearby jurisdictions that may be affected by emergency situations originating within this jurisdiction.
 - 2. Local government is also responsible for informing the Disaster District Committee in DPS Region 2A of major emergencies after time-sensitive warnings have been issued.
- G. Actions by Phases of Emergency Management
 - 1. Mitigation

- a. Establish an effective public warning system and appropriate operating procedures. Extend the system to keep up with growth. Adopt new methods of warning that increase the ability to reach citizens not well served by current systems.
 - b. Conduct public education designed to prevent citizens from taking unnecessary risks during emergency situations. An example would be a public information effort discouraging people from driving on flooded roads.
- 2. Preparedness
 - a. Test the local warning system on a regular basis.
 - b. Brief local media on local warning systems and coordinate procedures for transmitting EAS messages to radio and television stations and cable television providers.
 - c. Conduct public education on warning systems and the actions that should be taken for various types of warnings.
 - d. Maintain this annex.
- 3. Response:
 - a. Activate local warning system to alert the public of the emergency situation and provide appropriate instructions.
 - b. Conduct media monitoring to determine the need to clarify issues and distribute updated public instructions.
 - c. Discontinue warnings when they are no longer required.
- 4. Recovery
 - a. Advise the public when the emergency situation has been terminated.
 - b. If necessary, provide instructions for return of evacuees and safety information relating to reoccupation of damaged homes and businesses.
- 5. Prevention
 - a. Applying intelligence and other information to a range of activities including countermeasures as deterrence operations.
 - b. Security operations.
 - c. Investigations to determine the full nature and source of the threat.
 - d. Public health and agricultural surveillance and testing.
 - e. Law enforcement operations aimed at deterring, preempting, interdicting or disrupting illegal activity and apprehending perpetrators.

VI. ORGANIZATION & ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

A. General

1. The Mayor and City Council establish general policies for emergency warning and fund personnel and equipment to operate the warning systems.
2. The Police Chief will be responsible for operating the LWP.
3. The EMC will be responsible for cable TV interrupt, the telephone warning systems (CAER and NEWS) and coordination with the local NWS.

B. Task Assignments

1. The Police Chief will:
 - a. Develop an adequate warning system.
 - b. Staff and operate the LWP.
 - c. In coordination with the EMC, develop and maintain procedures for operation of the warning system, coordinating as necessary with other departments and agencies, the NWS, local radio and television stations, cable television companies, and other organizations.
 - d. Provide for maintenance and periodic testing of warning system equipment. See Appendix 3.
2. The Police Department's Emergency Communications Division will serve as the primary LWP and will:
 - a. Receive and, if necessary, verify and acknowledge warnings of emergency situations.
 - b. Make notification to local officials of emergency situations or conditions that could cause such situations as required.
 - c. In accordance with SOP or when directed, request activation of the warning systems to alert and provide instructions.
 - d. Identify requirements for route alerting and door-to-door warning for areas where other warning systems do not adequately reach the public.
 - e. Develop and maintain hazard specific warning procedures covering warning receipt, verification, and dissemination.
3. The EMC will:
 - a. In coordination with the Police Chief, develop operating procedures for the warning system, coordinating as necessary with other departments and agencies, the NWS, local radio and television stations, cable television companies, and other organizations.

- b. When the EOC is activated, assist in the development of warning messages and Special News Advisories.
- 4. The Mayor's PIO or designee will:
 - a. When an emergency has occurred, develop warning messages and public instructions for the specific situation at hand.
 - b. Develop procedures to facilitate the release of coordinated emergency public information to amplify basic information provided in warning messages.
 - c. Conduct media briefings in the vicinity of the EOC.
- 5. Law Enforcement will:

Provide units and personnel for route alerting and door-to-door warning when requested.
- 6. The Fire Service will:

Provide units and personnel for route alerting and door-to-door warning when requested.
- 7. All local government departments and agencies will:
 - a. Report emergency situations that merit warning local officials or the public to the OEM or LWP as appropriate.
 - b. When requested, provide personnel and equipment to assist in route alerting or door-to-door warning.
- 8. Media companies are expected to:
 - a. Disseminate warning messages and Special News Advisories provided by local government to the public as rapidly as possible.
 - b. Participate in periodic tests of the EAS and other warning systems.
- 9. Institutions, businesses, and places of public assembly are expected to:

Monitor radio and television and/or NOAA Weather Radio receivers for warnings and take appropriate actions to protect their patients, students, customers, and employees.

VII. DIRECTION & CONTROL

A. General

- 1. The Mayor may provide general guidance for warning activities.
- 2. The EMC may provide specific guidance for the LWP and warning systems.
- 3. For specific time-sensitive emergency situations, the LWP has been delegated authority to determine if a warning should be issued, formulate a warning if necessary and disseminate it. For other situations, the LWP must coordinate with one of the designated set of key officials who will

determine if a warning should be issued and approve the general content of any warning message that will be disseminated. Guidelines for this process are outlined in Appendix 3.

4. When the EOC has been activated, the EOC staff will normally determine who needs to be warned and how. The EMC, the lead PIO, and other members of the staff will formulate warning messages and public instructions.

B. Line of Succession

Refer to the Basic Plan, Volume I, section 3.4.2.

VIII. READINESS LEVELS

Refer to the Basic Plan, Volume I, section 3.2.2.

IX. ADMINISTRATION & SUPPORT

A. Agreements & Contracts

Should local resources prove to be inadequate during an emergency, requests will be made for assistance from other local jurisdictions, other agencies, and industry in accordance with existing mutual-aid agreements and contracts.

B. Reports & Records

1. The LWP shall maintain activity logs recording:
 - a. Warnings received.
 - b. Key personnel notified and the actions they directed to be taken.
 - c. Warnings disseminated to the public and the means of that dissemination.
2. The Incident Command Post and the EOC shall maintain logs of their activities.

C. Maintenance of Equipment

All warning systems owned by City will be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions for those systems.

X. ANNEX DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE

A. Development

The EMC is responsible for working with other agencies in the development, maintenance, and improvement of this annex. Each agency tasked will develop standard operating procedures that address assigned tasks.

B. Maintenance

This annex will be reviewed annually and updated in accordance with the schedule in section 1.4.4 of the Basic Plan, Volume I.

XI. REFERENCES

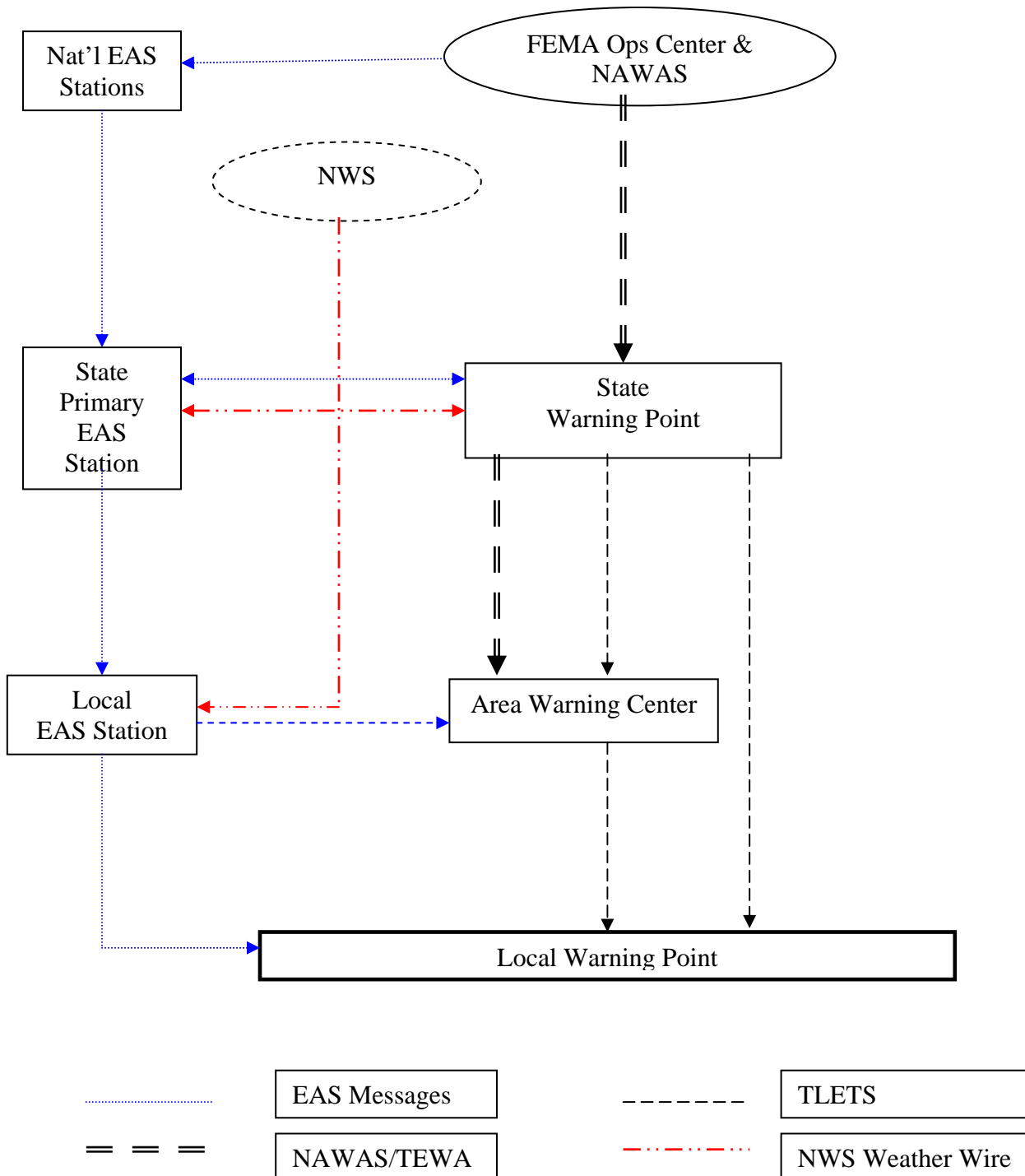
FEMA, *National Warning System Operations Manual*.

APPENDICES

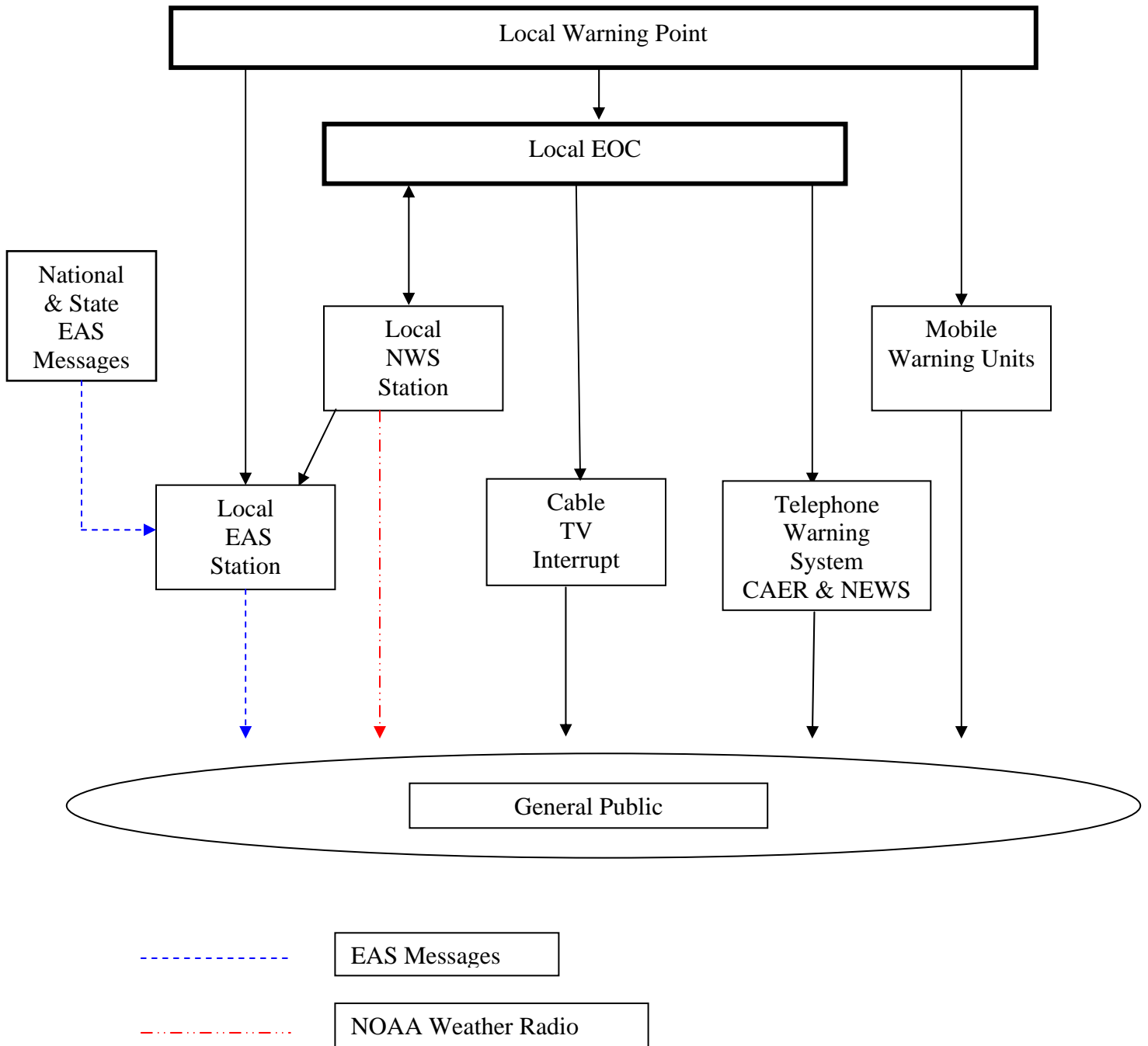
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APPENDIX 1 TO ANNEX A LOCAL WARNING SYSTEM DIAGRAM

How Warnings Are Received



How Warnings are Disseminated



APPENDIX 2 TO ANNEX A

NATIONAL WARNING MESSAGES

I. Types of National Warning Messages

National warning messages include:

- A. Attack Warning
- B. Fallout Warning
- C. Natural & Technological Emergency Warning

II. National Warning Message Dissemination

National warning messages are disseminated by federal authorities from the FEMA Operations Center through the National Warning System (NAWAS) to the states; NAWAS is a dedicated telephone system that disseminates voice warning messages. In Texas, such warning messages are received at the State Warning Point in Austin and relayed to AWC around the state by the Texas Warning System (TEWAS), which is also a dedicated telephone system that disseminates voice warning messages. AWC normally disseminate national warning messages they receive by TLETS teletype to LWPs. LWPs whose TLETS service is inoperative may receive warning messages by telephone or radio.

III. Local Action Upon Receipt of A National Warning Message

- A. When national warning messages are received at the LWP, such warnings should be disseminated as soon as possible through the local warning system, except that national warning messages received locally should not be forwarded for local broadcast as EAS messages, as federal authorities will broadcast such warnings as national EAS messages.
- B. For an Attack or Fallout Warning, outdoor warning systems should use the ATTACK signal – a 3 to 5 minute wavering tone. For other national warnings, the ALERT/ATTENTION signal (a 3 to 5 minute steady tone) should be used.
- C. All national warning messages received verbally (by telephone or radio) should be acknowledged.

IV. National Warning Messages

- A. Attack Warning
 - 1. Attack Warnings are issued when there is a threat of attack on the United States or portions of it.
 - 2. Incoming message format:

“This is the FEMA (Alternate) Operations Center. This is an Attack Warning. Declaration time (date & time) Zulu.”

Note: Zulu - 5 hours = Central Daylight Time; Zulu - 6 hours = Central Standard Time.

If the threat is limited to a specific area, the message will be tailored to describe the area at risk.

3. Termination message format:

“This is the FEMA (Alternate) Operations Center. The Attack Warning is terminated. Termination time (time) Zulu.”

B. Fallout Warning

1. Fallout warnings are intended to warn of radiation hazards resulting from nuclear detonations, accidental mishaps, and/or terrorist incidents.
2. There is no specific format for this type of message, but it appears that it will likely follow the general format of the message in paragraph D.2.b below.

C. Natural & Technological Emergency Warning

1. This type of warning may be issued to cover the following events: major natural disasters, errant domestic missile launch, reentering space debris, volcanic eruption, major dam failure and other hazards to public health, safety, and property that may threaten a wide area.
2. Incoming message format:

“This is the FEMA (Alternate) Operations Center with a special announcement for all states or the following state(s) _____
_____ or the following region(s) _____
_____.

Text: (free text message describing the problem and appropriate protective actions)”
3. There is no specific format for this type of message.

D. Accidental Missile Launch.

1. An accidental missile launch by the United States or other countries may generate a Natural & Technological Emergency Warning or a Fallout Warning or both, depending on the type of missile involved.
2. Incoming message format:
 - a. “This is the FEMA (Alternate) Operations Center with a Emergency Warning for the following (states, counties, cities). An accidental missile launch threatens the following areas: (states, counties, cities). Advise population by all means to take cover.”
 - b. For accidental launches which result in a nuclear weapons detonation, the following message will be used: “This is the FEMA (Alternate) Operations Center. An accidentally launched nuclear weapon detonated in (city, county, state) at _____ local time. Radioactive fallout is possible. Persons in (cities, counties, states) should be advised to remain under cover and await further instructions from state or local authorities. Residents are advised

to take protective actions in accordance with local community shelter plans and to be alert for further instructions from state and local authorities. Residents in all other areas are advised that protective actions are not required at this time.”

- c. For accidental launches that do not result in a nuclear weapons detonation, the following message will be used: “This is the FEMA (Alternate) Operations Center. An accidentally launched nuclear weapon impacted in (city, county, state) at _____ local time. A nuclear detonation did not – repeat – did not occur. Persons in (cities, counties, states) should be alert for further instructions from state or local authorities. Residents in all other areas are advised that protective actions are not required at this time.”

APPENDIX 3 TO ANNEX A
GENERAL WARNING POINT PROCEDURES

- I. Receiving Warning Information
 - A. The LWP may receive emergency warnings by:
 - 1. TLETS message from the State Warning Point or Area Warning Center
 - 2. Telephone or fax from the SOC
 - 3. Radio, telephone, or fax from the Area Warning Center
 - 4. Radio, telephone, or fax from state or federal agencies or other local governments
 - 5. Radio, telephone or fax from industry, government employees, or citizens
 - 6. NOAA weather radio
 - B. Incoming messages should be acknowledged, if required (for example: national warning messages).
 - C. The date and time on written messages and the date and time of receipt of all messages shall be entered in the Communication Log.
 - D. For emergency situations reported by citizens and others unknown to the LWP operator, the operator should seek to confirm the source and information provided by any available means before taking action on the report, unless there are confirming reports from other sources.
- II. Emergency Notifications
 - A. The LWP shall make notifications of routine emergency situations to the department or agency that normally responds to such situations.
 - B. Notifications of emergency situations and other actions taken in response to such notifications shall be recorded in the Communications Log.
- III. Dissemination of Warnings
 - A. The LWP and/or OEM may disseminate emergency warnings and public instructions by:
 - 1. Forwarding a voice or hard copy message to the local EAS station for broadcast.
 - 2. Route alerting and door-to-door warning.
 - 3. OEM encoding a voice message using the EAS encoder and forwarding it electronically to EAS stations.
 - 4. Providing a voice or text message to the NWS for broadcast on NOAA Weather Radio.
 - 5. OEM using the cable television interrupt to broadcast a voice message.
 - 6. Activating the NEWS telephone warning system to provide a voice message to selected telephone subscribers.
 - 7. OEM Activating the CAER Line, if needed.

- B. The LWP may activate the local warning system for certain time-sensitive emergency situations. For other emergency situations, the LWP must seek approval from a key official to activate the local warning system.
 - C. The LWP is authorized to activate the local warning system without prior approval for the following emergency situations:
 - 1. An NWS tornado warning for the local area or the confirmed sighting of a tornado on the ground in the local area.
 - 2. A national civil emergency warning received from the Area Warning Center.
 - 3. A catastrophic emergency situation that poses an immediate threat to life, such as a dam failure.
 - D. For other emergency situations, the LWP shall relay the warning received to one of the following key officials and obtain guidance on activating the local warning system and the suggested content of any local warning messages:
 - 1. The EMC
 - 2. The Police Chief
 - E. When a decision is made to activate the warning system, an EAS message should be dispatched to local broadcasters first. Other warning systems should be activated as soon as possible thereafter.
 - 1. It may be necessary for the LWP to prepare an appropriate messages.
 - 2. National civil emergency warning messages received locally should not be forwarded to local EAS stations for broadcast, as plans call for federal authorities to enter such messages into EAS at the national level.
 - 3. If it is determined that route alerting and/or door-to-door warning are required, the LWP must alert fire and police dispatchers to assign units to those tasks. The LWP should provide the warning message and any instructions that are to be disseminated so that these can be passed on to the units involved.
 - 4. Warning messages and public instructions should be updated as the situation changes and canceled when no longer needed.
 - F. The LWP should record the activation of the various local warning systems and dispatch of warning and public instruction messages in its Communication Log.
- IV. Testing and Exercising the Warning System
- A. System Testing

All components of the warning system will be tested on a regular basis.
 - B. Exercises
 - 1. It is desirable that preparation of warning messages, public instructions and the activation of warning systems be included in emergency exercise activities where such tasks are appropriate for the scenario being exercised

in order to ensure that components of the system are adequate and the operational procedures are adequate.

2. If warning systems are activated at other than normal times for exercises, it is essential to give due notice to the public that such activations will occur.

APPENDIX 4 TO ANNEX A

EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM (EAS) PROCEDURES

I. Purpose

The purpose of EAS is to provide real time communication, information, direction and instruction in the event of an emergency requiring public action.

II. EAS Plans

For purposes of coordinating the use of EAS, the State Emergency Communications Committee has developed a statewide EAS Plan. Local Area Emergency Communications Committees for each of the State's EAS Districts develop local EAS plans. These plans address the concept of operations for EAS, message priorities, procedures for activation of EAS, and message formats. Local plans typically designate individuals authorized to activate EAS and authentication requirements.

III. EAS Activation

A. Authority

The following individuals may request activation of EAS:

1. The Mayor
2. The EMC
3. The Police Chief

B. Methods

EAS messages will be transmitted from the LWP to EAS stations by telephone or fax.

1. **Voice & Fax Messages.** The authentication code should be provided for voice messages and included on fax messages. The LWP should coordinate with the EAS station to determine the methods of delivery. Faxed messages will normally be read by the station staff. Voice messages may be transmitted live or recorded and then transmitted; the latter is preferred if the message must be repeated. For voice messages, it is desirable that the individual generating the message work from a written script or notes to ensure that all essential information is covered.
2. **Forwarding Messages for Transmission.** EAS messages will be forwarded to the EAS Local Primary Station if the emergency situation affects areas beyond the local area or if stations that broadcast EAS messages in the local area are unattended during the period when EAS activation is required. Stations that are in unattended operation at certain hours of the day must set their EAS Decoder to Automatic Mode so programming is interrupted and EAS messages broadcast automatically. If the emergency situation affects only an area served by one or two stations or cable companies, local officials may request EAS activation from those stations directly if they are staffed.

C. Operating Guidance

1. EAS messages are limited by hardware design to two minutes.
2. If a message provided for broadcast by EAS stations is no longer current, it should be cancelled or replaced by an updated message.
3. If an EAS station is required by license restrictions to operate at reduced power or cease transmitting during certain specified time periods, and activation of EAS is requested during that time period, the station may operate its transmitter as needed using full power.

D. Broadcast of EAS Messages

When a request for EAS activation is received and authenticated, the EAS station will typically:

1. Interrupt normal programming.
2. Send the EAS Header Code.
3. Send the EAS Attention Signal (8 to 25 seconds).
4. Make an activation announcement: "This is the (local area) Texas EAS. Important information will follow."
5. Broadcast the emergency message.
6. Make a termination announcement: "This is the (local area) Texas EAS. We now resume normal programming."
7. Send the EAS End-of-Message Code.
8. Resume normal programming.

E. Tests. Testing of the EAS system will be as described in the _____ District EAS Plan.

IV. EAS Stations. EAS stations serving the local area include:

A. Local Primary Station 1

Call sign: KTRH Frequency: AM 740
Location: Houston

B. Local Primary Station 2

Call sign: KUHF Frequency: FM 88.7
Location: Houston

V. Local EAS Plan

A copy of the Local Area Plan for the Houston Operational Area is kept in the OEM.

APPENDIX 5 TO ANNEX A

LOCAL WARNING & EMERGENCY INFORMATION MESSAGES

- I. This appendix provides two types of warning messages for a number of emergency situations.
 - A. Warning Messages.

These messages alert the public to emergency situations and provide directions on what they should do and not do to protect themselves. As the time limit for warning messages transmitted via the EAS is approximately two minutes, and the capability of television warning displays is limited, warning messages are generally short and concise. Warning messages are generally disseminated through warning systems and broadcast every 15 minutes until they are canceled or replaced by an updated message.
 - B. Special News Advisories.

Special News Advisories amplify information contained in the warning messages, provide further information regarding an emergency situation, and may be used to provide information on impending threats that do not yet warrant public warning. Special News Advisories are generally sent to the media through normal communications channels for further dissemination to the public.
 - C. The City of Houston does not have pre-scripted Warning messages and Special News Advisories. **The City may or may not use the samples listed in Tabs A-H, make modifications to them or develop its own messages/advisories.**
- II. The following warning messages and Special News Advisories are provided in this appendix:
 - Tab A Warning Message – General Incident
 - Tab B Warning Message – Road/Facility Closure
 - Tab C Warning Message – Shelter-in-Place
 - Tab D Special News Advisory – Pre-Evacuation Information
 - Tab E Warning Message – Urgent Evacuation
 - Tab F Warning Message – Deliberate Evacuation
 - Tab G Special News Advisory – Supplemental Evacuation Information
 - Tab H Special News Advisory – Schools & Public Facilities
- III. General Guidance for Warning & Public Information Messages
 - A. Protective Action Areas. Areas in which protective actions, such as evacuation or shelter-in-place, are being implemented should be described with reference to obvious geographic features, such as roads and rivers, rather than with abstract descriptions such as a one mile radius of some intersection. The preferred method of describing the area should use compass directions and neighborhood and landmark names where appropriate.

Example:

The area to be evacuated is north of Green Street, east of Olive St, south of James Road, and west of Rainy Road. This area includes the Green Tree and Hidden Hollow subdivisions and the Big Bargains Shopping Center.

- B. Evacuation Routes. The description of evacuation routes should make it clear which direction(s) evacuees should go and which travel directions they should avoid.

Example:

People who are west of Meridian Avenue should go west on Kingman Road or Exeter Drive. People who are east of Meridian Avenue should go east on 10th, 11th, or 12th Streets or Easy Street. Do not leave the evacuation area by going north.

TAB A TO APPENDIX 5 TO ANNEX A

Warning – General Incident

1. The City of Houston has issued the following warning for those who live, work, or are visiting in the City.
2. An emergency situation involving the City of Houston is currently in progress at: *[Describe location by reference to facility name (if known), street and cross street, other geographic features (rivers, rail lines, etc.), and neighborhood name where appropriate].*
3. Emergency personnel are currently responding to this incident and local officials are monitoring the situation. To keep yourself safe and avoid impeding the emergency response, please avoid this area until further notice.
4. To repeat, an emergency situation involving City of Houston is currently in progress at: *(Repeat location in 2 above)*. Please avoid this area.
5. Do not call 911 for information about the emergency situation. Instead, stay tuned to this station for additional official information.

TAB B TO APPENDIX 5 TO ANNEX A

Warning – Road/Facility Closure

1. The City of Houston has issued the following warning for those who live, work, or are visiting in the City of Houston.
2. It has been necessary to close certain local streets and highways due to:
 - ☐ flooding
 - ☐ heavy accumulations of snow and ice
 - ☐ fire / explosion
 - ☐ incident involving hazardous materials
 - ☐ Other:
3. As of _____ today, the following roads have been closed by law enforcement officials:

Street or Route

At or Between

Please avoid these routes.

4. ☐ If you must travel, use alternate routes, such as:
5. ☐ We recommend that you refrain from driving and remain at home due to the extremely bad travel conditions.
6. ☐ In addition, the following facilities have been closed due to the emergency situation:
7. Again, the roads and streets that have been closed are: *(Repeat list in 3 above)*
8. Please stay tuned to this station for additional information on the current emergency situation.

TAB C TO APPENDIX 5 TO ANNEX A

Warning - Shelter-in-Place

1. The City of Houston has issued the following warning for those who live, work, or are visiting in City of Houston.
2. There has been an accidental release of hazardous material that is affecting a portion of the local area. People in the following area must take protective measures:

[Describe area boundaries]

3. If you are located in this area, do the following immediately in order to protect yourself:
 - A. Go inside your home, workplace, or the nearest building that appears to be reasonably air tight and stay there. Take your pets with you.
 - B. Close all doors, windows, and any fireplace dampers.
 - C. Turn off any heating or cooling system that draws in air from the outside.
 - D. Keep your radio on and tuned to receive emergency announcements and instructions.
 - E. Gather items that you may need to take with you if you are advised to evacuate.
4. People traveling in vehicles should seek shelter in the nearest air tight structure. If a suitable structure is not immediately available, travelers should roll up car windows, close air vents, and turn off the heater or air conditioner until they reach a suitable building.
5. If shelter is not immediately available, keep a handkerchief, towel, or damp cloth snugly over your nose and mouth until you get indoors.

6. (If school is in session.)

☐ Students at the following school(s) are taking shelter at their schools:

Parents should not attempt to pick up students at school until the hazardous situation is resolved and they are advised it is safe to do so.

☐ Students at the following school(s) [have been/are being] evacuated to other facilities:

Parents should not attempt to pick up students from schools that have been evacuated. Local officials will provide information on where to pick up school children as soon as it is available.

7. If you know of any neighbors or co-workers with hearing or language problems or special needs, please advise them of this message.
8. Please do not call 911 or local emergency officials for information. Stay tuned to this station for additional information.

TAB D TO APPENDIX 5 TO ANNEX A
Special News Advisory – Pre-Evacuation

1. The City of Houston has issued the following advisory for those who live, work, or are visiting in City of Houston.
2. Due to the threat of _____, it may be necessary for people who live, work or are visiting in the certain local areas to evacuate in the near future. This area(s) that may be at risk include:

[Describe area boundaries]

3. Evacuation is NOT being recommended at this time. Local officials will advise you if evacuation is necessary. However, you should be prepared to evacuate if needed. To prepare, you should:
 - A. Assemble the following emergency supplies:
 - Clothing for your family for several days
 - Bedding, pillows, and towels
 - Prescription medicines & spare eyeglasses
 - Soap and toiletries
 - Baby food and diapers
 - Your address book or list of important telephone numbers
 - Your checkbook, credit cards, and cash
 - Your drivers license and identification cards
 - A portable radio and flashlight
 - B. You should also:
 - Gather suitcases, boxes, or bags to hold your emergency supplies
 - Be prepared to secure your home or office and your property before you depart
 - Ensure your car is in good shape and you have adequate fuel
 - Decide where you will go if you have to evacuate. Make arrangements with relatives or friends or consider making hotel or motel reservations
4. ☐ Potential evacuation routes from the area(s) at risk include:
5. ☐ Potential evacuation routes from the area(s) at risk are described in:
6. If you know of any neighbors or co-workers with hearing or language problems or special needs, please advise them of this message. And if you have neighbors or co-worker's who do not have transportation, offer to assist them if you can.
7. We want to emphasize that this is a PRECAUTIONARY message about possible evacuation. Evacuation is NOT being recommended at this time.

8. Keep your radio or TV on and listen for further information about this situation. Please do not call 911 or local emergency officials for information as this ties up telephone lines needed for emergency operations.

TAB E TO APPENDIX 5 TO ANNEX A

Warning Message – Urgent Evacuation

1. The City of Houston has issued the following warning for those who live, work, or are visiting in City of Houston.
2. Due to _____ that [threatens/is affecting a portion of the local area, the Mayor recommends that people in the following area evacuate immediately to protect their health and safety:
3. Recommended evacuation routes from the area(s) at risk include:
4. Be sure to take essential items such as:
 - prescription medicines
 - eyeglasses
 - identification cards
 - checkbook
 - credit cards
 - valuable papers

Do not delay your departure to collect other belongings.
5. Take your pets with you, but make sure you bring a leash, crate, or cage for them. Some shelters will not accept pets.
6. If you have no means of transportation or if you are physically unable to evacuate on your own, ask a neighbor to assist you.
7. If you know of any neighbors or co-workers with hearing or language problems or special needs, please advise them of this message. And if you have neighbors or co-workers who need help or do not have transportation, offer to assist them if you can.
8. Repeating, local officials recommend the people in the following area(s) evacuate now:
(Repeat the area description in paragraph 2 above.)
9. Please do not use your telephone except to report a true emergency. Stay tuned to this station for more information and instructions from local officials.

TAB F TO APPENDIX 5 TO ANNEX A
Warning Message – Deliberate Evacuation

1. The City of Houston has issued the following warning for those who live, work, or are visiting in City of Houston.
2. Due to ____, the Mayor recommends that people in the following area evacuate the area to protect their health and safety:
3. Recommended evacuation routes from the area(s) at risk include:
4. Be sure to take essential items such as:
 - prescription medicines
 - eyeglasses
 - baby supplies
 - personal care items
 - identification cards
 - checkbook and credit cards
 - valuable papers

Listen to this station for more information on what you need to take with you. Secure your home before you depart.
5. Take your pets with you, but make sure you bring a leash, crate, or cage for them. Remember some shelters will not accept pets.
6. Decide where you will stay until the emergency situation is resolved. Staying with relatives or friends or in a hotel or motel is a good choice.
7. If you can't stay with friends or relatives or find a motel room, listen to this station for more information on the locations of public shelters.
8. If you have no means of transportation or if you are physically unable to evacuate on your own, ask a neighbor to assist you.

9. If you know of any neighbors or co-workers with hearing or language problems or special needs, please advise them of this message. And if you have neighbors or co-workers who need help or do not have transportation, offer to assist them if you can.
10. Repeating, local officials recommend the people in the following area(s) evacuate as soon as possible: *(Repeat the area description in paragraph 2 above.)*
11. Please do not use your telephone except to report a true emergency. Stay tuned to this station for more information and instructions from local officials.

TAB G TO APPENDIX 5 TO ANNEX A

Special News Advisory – Supplemental Evacuation Information

1. The City of Houston has issued the following advisory for those who live, work, or are visiting in City of Houston.
2. Due to the threat of _____, local officials have recommended that people who live, work or are visiting in the following areas evacuate to protect their health and safety:
[Describe area boundaries.]
3. Use the following evacuation routes: [list evacuation routes]
4. You should take the following emergency supplies with you :
 - clothing for your family for several days
 - bedding, pillows, and towels for each family member
 - prescription medicines & spare eyeglasses
 - soap and toiletries
 - baby food and diapers
 - address book or list of important telephone numbers
 - checkbook, credit cards, and cash
 - drivers license and identification cards
 - portable radio and flashlight, with extra batteries
5. Plan where you will stay until the emergency situation is resolved. Staying with relatives or friends or in a hotel or motel is a good choice.
6. If you cannot find another place to stay, temporary public shelters will be/have been opened at:
7. Take your pets with you, but make sure you bring a leash, crate, or cage for them as well as pet food.
8. Secure your property before you depart. Shut off all appliances, except refrigerators and freezers. Lock all doors and windows.
9. Expect travel delays on evacuation routes. If you have a substantial distance to drive, you may want to take drinks and ready-to-eat food in your car in case you are delayed.
10. If you have no means of transportation or if you are physically unable to evacuate on your own, ask a neighbor to help you.
11. If you have neighbors or co-workers, who need help or do not have transportation, offer to assist them if you can.

12. If you know of any neighbors or co-workers with hearing or language problems or special needs, please advise them of this message.
13. Please do not use your telephone except to report a true emergency. Stay tuned to this station for more information and instructions from local officials. If you missed some of the information in this advisory, it will be broadcast again soon.

TAB H TO APPENDIX 5 TO ANNEX A

Special News Advisory – School & Public Facilities

1. The City of Houston has issued the following advisory for those who live, work, or are visiting in City of Houston.
2. The current emergency situation involving _____ has affected the operation of the number of local facilities. This advisory is intended to provide you an update on the status of schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and other key facilities.
3. ☐ All local public schools have been closed.
4. ☐ The following schools have been closed and students [are being/have been] returned to their homes:

5. ☐ The following schools have been evacuated and their students relocated to other facilities:

School

Students relocated to:

- ☐ Parents should pick up their children at these host facilities.
6. ☐ The following hospitals and nursing homes have been evacuated and their patients relocated to other facilities:

Facility

Patients relocated to:

7. ☐ The following government offices, parks, recreation areas, and other public facilities have been closed:
8. Please stay tuned to this station for more information and instructions from local officials.
9. ☐ And please refrain from using the telephone unless you have a true emergency.